

**Town of Westford
Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes
November 7, 2005
Cameron Senior Center
Pleasant Street
7:00 P.M.**

The following are the minutes of the November 7, 2005, Town of Westford Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. A permanent set of these minutes (maintained for a period of six years) is retained in the Town Clerk's office. A set of these minutes and a tape recording are retained in the Parks & Recreation Department.

Commissioners Present: Colleen Barisano, Kacy Caviston, Wayne D'Agostino, John Johnson, Carolyn Metcalf, Steve Spinney, Mary Ellen Tynan

Staff Present: Patricia Savage, Director, Sandra Habe, Assistant Director

Visitors: Emily Teller - Bruce Freeman Trail Representative

I. Approval of Agenda (7:10 p.m.)

John motioned to approve the agenda. Steve seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 3, 2005

John motioned to approve the October 3, 2005 minutes with corrections. Steve seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Forum – Emily Teller gave an overview of the Bruce Freeman Trail Project. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is to be built on the right of way of the Old New Haven Railroad Framingham & Lowell line, passing through the communities of Lowell, Chelmsford, Westford, Carlisle, Acton, Concord, and Sudbury. Engineering and permitting have been completed for the northernmost 7.5 miles (phase 1) which runs from Lowell through Chelmsford into Westford. Construction is expected to begin in 2005.

The Bruce Freeman Trail Project may be seeking Westford CPC support in the 2009 budget. The design portion of Acton's section of the rail trail will be used to create a cost estimate for Westford. Westford has ¼ mile of trail that we would be responsible for financing and overseeing. Emily Teller will keep the commission up to date on any new developments regarding the trail.

III. Projects/Tasks

A. Stony Brook/Veterans Memorial Complex – Carolyn Metcalf has received approval for the Westford Friends of Recreation to build tennis courts at Stony Brook adjacent to the existing courts. CPC approved support for funding the courts, but Town Meeting voted it down. Carolyn has raised money to build the courts and will continue to raise money this year, with the intent of building next summer, 2006. Carolyn read an email that she received from Steve Foster, Superintendent of Schools regarding the courts. Carolyn and Donna will attend the November 28th School Committee Meeting to talk about building the additional tennis courts and they will explain how having four or five courts will allow for more team play for the middle school and high school players. A \$10,000.00 donation will allow the donor to name the court.

B. East Boston Camps –

EBC Master Plan Committee Norman focused the group on the task of master planning the area. The master plan will not be ready for May town meeting. Peter Berube was hired to survey the buildings and gave an estimate to rebuild/repair at \$3.5 million. Leslie Thomas reminded the group that they need to focus on the care, custody and control of the property.

- i. Neighborhood Meeting – no change
- ii. Wetlands flagging – Kacy distributed maps of the Nutting Road parcel to the commissioners. Steve Erickson from Norse Environmental will flag our section. He wants to coordinate with Bill Turner (Conservation) so the project can be completed in one visit. The Rivers Protection Act requires a 200' buffer. This should not affect our project. There are wet meadows which are not useable. The blue line, on the map, shows the possible flagging, it includes a 100' buffer from the edge of the wetlands. There is quite a bit of disturbed land (previously plowed and farmed) that may allow for greater use of the land. The property is estimated to have 4 to 5 acres of land outside of the buffer zone. It is hoped that the area will be flagged by the end of the week. The value of the services is approximately \$5,000.00. Pat shared a flagging proposal with the Commission.
- iv. Field Development Plan – no new information
- v. Soil testing – no new information
- vi. Westford Academy Boosters/fundraising – no new information

C. Old Highway Garage – The second contractor has gone out of business. The town now hopes that the new garage will be completed by next spring or summer.

D. VMC (Veterans Memorial Complex) – The Parks & Grounds crew lined the flag football fields. There were some conflicts in scheduling due to the extremely wet fall and the number of make-ups required by the schools. This issue gets into the discussion of centralized scheduling. Pat clarified for the group that the Parks & Recreation Department is interested in the care and control of the property not the custody.

E. Wing/Lavallee Venture – An ice rink proposal was turned down by the Town of Littleton, 40B housing will now be built on that site. The Lavallee site looks like the best possible location.

F. American Legion – Westford Community Playground – No new information.

G. Marketing – Carolyn will contact Betsy Andrews.

H. Tech Park West – Is under litigation.

I. Adams Property – no new information

J. Pond Street Property – no new information (To update the new members Pat explained that it is a small piece of property used by the Police and Fire for lake access.)

K. Rules and Regulations Policies and Signs – The commission needs to approve the changes to the rules and regulations, after John reviews them.

L. Credit Card Payment and online registration. The town is using Unibank to accept credit and debit cards. Pat needs to look into the best options for the recreation programs and WPC.

M. Town-wide Coaches Rules/Policies – Wayne brought the hockey rules and regulations. The Commission is considering setting conduct rules for coaches. Wayne suggested that the Commission could act as the arbitrator for the sports organizations when disputes occur. Although the sports organizations are independent programs, they are also part of the town and use town-owned properties and therefore could benefit by working with the Commission on communication issues. Colleen will bring the lacrosse rules and regulations to the next meeting. Kacy brought basketball and baseball. The commission wants to have this ready for the sports organization meeting in January.

IV. Reports/Updates

A. Westford Partnership for Children – Rose Vetere included the WPC program in the “Abbot Press”. A copy needs to be sent to Bill Olsen and Betsy Andrews. Wayne is offering ice time for Middle School students on December 1, it is a parent conference day. He requested that recreation offer an activity.

B. Budgets – There is a kick-off meeting Thursday November 17, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at the Rogers Fire Station. Committee members, Boards and Department Heads are all invited to the meeting. Steve Ledoux sent a memorandum regarding the meeting. The state is considering voting on changing revolving funds from being annually voted in to being voted in once, unless there is a change in amount of the fund. The state is also looking to allow a change from 1% to 5% of the total operating budgets. The local revenues have increased but the turn back to the communities has not increased.

C. Fields/Parks:

- a.** Grounds – The fields are being winterized. Next year there will be changes in how the fields are set up at the Jack Walsh area. The teams will be 8X8 for fall 2006, which will require smaller fields. We will however still need two large fields. American Legion fields – G1 and G3 have had major work completed. The fields have been leveled and materials have been brought in resulting in no puddling on the fields. Pat noted that the Parks and Grounds crew uses an integrated pest management plan for property maintenance. As a last resort target specific pesticides are used, an example would be ground wasps.
- b.** Structures – no new information.
- c.** Fencing – no new information
- d.** Parking – no new information

V. Old Business

A. WPC Software – Pat met with Joe Polino today. He hopes to have a working model by Wednesday – it should be up and running in January (along with credit cards).

B. Route 40 Modern Continental parcel – Carolyn will call and see if the land is purchased and whether or not the new owners might be interested in selling a piece of the parcel.

C. Comprehensive Town Master Plan – no new information

VI. New Business

A. **Commission Members** – Colleen Barisano and Carolyn Metcalf are the new members to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

B. Other New Business –

1. MRPA State Conference – Pat and Sandra will be attending the State Conference on November 14.
2. Vice Chair – the commission needs to elect a vice chair.
3. Athletic Fields – Pat, Sandra, Bob Conley, Wayne, and Gus Bickford met about the in-filled turf surfacing. The group would like to have 3 fields installed by 2007. Two at Nutting Road and one at the Academy. Westford Academy will be considered a new facility as its use will change to become open to the entire community. This change in function may allow for the use of CPC funds for the overall project. Jack Schofield may be asked to help out with our project since he was involved with the Acton/Boxborough in-filled turf/new facility project. It is important to note that the Library will be looking for \$5 million for building expansion. The in-filled turf group discussed the possibility of extending the project over two, three or four years.
4. IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Plan – Elaine Major has applied for a grant to write a pesticide policy for the town. The Parks & Recreation Department was notified on October 26, she met with the Conservation Committee on October 18 regarding this project. Elaine did not consult any of the Town Departments who are involved in maintenance of land. We have already spent 21/2 years to develop an IPM plan to use as a model for town use. There is a significant difference what the municipality uses and what the town departments use on fields/lawns. It is believed that Elaine's goal is have ban pesticide use. The Parks & Grounds crew is trained in the use of pesticides and rarely use them. Pat will ask Lois to write an article for the Eagle about our current IPM plan.

VII. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be December 5, 2005.

VIII. Adjournment

Mary Ellen motioned to adjourn at 8:57 p.m. Steve seconded the motion. Agreed unanimously.